

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: File

THROUGH: Dennis Frederick, Manager
Ground Water Protection Section

FROM: John Whitehead

DATE: November 12, 1998

SUBJECT: Inspection at Kennecott Tailings Impoundment

On Tuesday November 3, 1998, I accompanied Tony Gallegos, Wayne Hedberg and Tom Munson from the Division of Oil Gas and Mining on a joint inspection of the Kennecott Tailings Impoundment. Bob Dunne, Abbi Davidson, and Paula Doughty from Kennecott accompanied us throughout the inspection.

The primary purpose of the visit was to continue to follow the status of construction associated with the new expansion portion of the Tailings Impoundment. The expansion portion represents sufficient capacity to receive tailings from the operation of the Bingham Canyon Mine for the next 25 to 30 years.

The east and west cyclone stations are complete. These stations will separate the coarse fraction (underflow) from the finer fraction (overflow) of the tailings. The west cyclone is operational and taking tailings from the Copperton line. The east cyclone station is essentially complete and in the testing/de-bugging phase. The coarse fraction is being used to build the embankment for the expansion portion of the impoundment. All other tailings flows are currently placed in the existing impoundment. The new expansion portion of the impoundment is scheduled to begin to receive overflow (fine fraction) tailings in late 1998 or early 1999. The complete transition off the existing impoundment to the expansion portion of the impoundment will occur sequentially over the next 4 to 6 years.

The existing impoundment will be systematically reclaimed over the next several years in segments. At the time of this inspection reclaim dike #2 running north and south was being installed on the western end of the existing impoundment. Once the dike is complete and the tailings in this area are sufficiently dry to allow equipment onto the surface, the area will be seeded for reclamation.

Bob Dunne indicated that the Tailings Modernization group would be turning over operation of the expansion portion of the impoundment to the Kennecott operations group in approximately March 1999.